Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A data apparatus comprising:

an open-backed housing having a front wall, and first and second side walls; and

an open-backed portion defined between the first and second side walls[[;]],

~~whereby~~ the open-backed portion [[is]] being disposed to interchangeably receive any of a plurality of discrete, similarly-sized modules ~~therein~~ selected from the group consisting of an alignment panel module, a cartridge reader module, a cartridge writer module, a cartridge read/write module and a cartridge storage magazine.

2. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 1 further comprising top and bottom plates connected to the front and side walls.

3. (Currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 1 further comprising top and bottom plates connected to the front and side walls[[;]], wherein the top and bottom plates are removable.

4. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 1 wherein the open-backed portion is selected from the group consisting of a fully open back portion and a partially open back portion.

5. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 1 wherein the plurality of discrete, similarly-sized modules are of a standard module size.

6. (Canceled)

7. (Currently amended) A data apparatus comprising:

an open-backed housing having a front wall, and first and second side walls; and

an open-backed portion defined between the first and second side walls;

whereby the open-backed portion is disposed to interchangeably receive any of a plurality of discrete, similarly-sized modules therein; and

~~An apparatus according to claim 1~~ wherein the housing has a device selected from the group consisting of a cartridge access device, a cartridge access robotic device, a cartridge access pick and place device, and a vertical lift assembly, disposed in operative relationship therein.

8. (Currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 1 wherein ~~the housing is adapted to receive at least one cartridge storage magazine,~~ the cartridge storage magazine ~~being~~ is adapted to receive at least one data cartridge.

9. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 1 wherein the housing has at least one cartridge storage magazine door defined therein.

10. (Currently amended) An apparatus according to ~~claim 1~~ claim 7 wherein the housing has at least one cartridge storage magazine door defined therein and, the at least one cartridge storage magazine door has at least one of the devices selected from the group consisting of an associated magazine door lock, magazine door solenoid, and magazine door sensing apparatus, connected in operable relationship therewith.

11. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 1 wherein the housing has a control panel defined therein.

12. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 1 further including a system controller selected from the group consisting of a host computer, a network connection and a control panel.

13. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 1 wherein the apparatus is an apparatus selected from the group consisting of a single plane apparatus and a multi-plane apparatus.

14. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 1 wherein the housing is adapted to be disposed in a system selected from the group consisting of a single plane system, a multi-plane system, a multi-plane stack system and a multi-plane rack mounted system.

15. (Currently amended) An apparatus according to ~~claim 1~~ claim 7 wherein the housing is adapted to be disposed in a multi-plane data storage system and has a cartridge access device disposed in operative relationship therein; whereby the cartridge access device is disposed to operate in all of the planes of the multi-plane data storage system.

16. (Currently amended) A data system comprising:

a housing comprising:

a front wall, and

first and second side walls; and

a back portion defining an opening; and

a plurality of separate modules, ~~whereby~~ selected from the group consisting of an alignment panel module, a cartridge reader module, a cartridge writer module, a cartridge read/write module and a cartridge storage magazine and each of the plurality of separate modules [[fits]]fitting interchangeably within the opening of the back portion.

17. (Original) A system according to claim 16 wherein the

opening of the back portion of the housing is coactive with each of the separate modules to receive any one of the plurality of separate modules therein.

18. (Original) A system according to claim 16 wherein each of the separate modules is separately coactive with the opening of the back portion of the housing to fit therewithin.

19. (Original) A system according to claim 16 wherein the opening of the back portion defines a standard opening size into which each of the plurality of separate modules are standardly-sized to be received.

20. (Original) A system according to claim 16 further including a system controller selected from the group consisting of a host computer, a network and a control panel.

21. (Original) A system according to claim 16, the system being defined having a capacity selected from the group consisting of a single plane and a multi-plane.

22. (Currently amended) A data system comprising:

a housing comprising:

a front wall, and

first and second side walls; and

a back portion defining an opening; and

a plurality of separate modules, whereby each of the plurality of separate modules fits interchangeably within the opening of the back portion; and

~~A system according to claim 16~~ wherein the housing is adapted to be alternatively disposed in any of a multi-plane stack system and a multi-plane rack mounted system.

23. (Currently amended) A system according to ~~claim 16~~ claim 22 wherein the housing is adapted to be disposed in either

of a multi-plane system and a multi-plane rack mounted system; and, whereby the system has a cartridge access device disposed in operative relationship therein; whereby the cartridge access device is disposed to operate in all of the planes of the multi-plane system.

24. (Currently amended) A method for configuring a data system comprising:

providing a data system comprising:

a housing having a front wall, and first and second side walls; and a back area defined between the first and second side walls, the back area having an opening defined therein, the opening being disposed to interchangeably receive any of [[; and]]

a plurality of discrete similarly-sized modules~~; whereby the opening in the back area of the housing is disposed to interchangeably receive any of the plurality of discrete similarly-sized modules therein~~;

selecting a discrete one of the similarly-sized modules from the group consisting of an alignment panel module, a cartridge reader module, a cartridge writer module, a cartridge read/write module and a cartridge storage magazine; and,

inserting the selected one of the discrete modules into the opening.

25. (Original) A method according to claim 24 further comprising:

selecting a second discrete module; and,

interchangeably inserting the second module in the opening.

26. (Original) A method according to claim 24 wherein the data system is a first data system with a first housing and a first set of discrete similarly-sized modules; further

comprising:

providing a second data system comprising:

a second housing having a respective front wall, and respective first and second side walls; and a respective second back area defined between the first and second side walls, the second back area having an opening defined therein; and

a second set of a plurality of discrete similarly-sized modules; whereby the opening in the back area of the housing is disposed to interchangeably receive any of the plurality of discrete similarly-sized modules therein; and

building a multi-plane system in a system selected from the group consisting of a stack and a rack-mounted system, whereby the second data system is disposed above the first data system.

27. (Original) A method according to claim 26 wherein the selected module from the first set of modules is a first module; and further comprising:

selecting a discrete second module from the second set of a discrete similarly-sized modules, whereby the second module is different from the first module; and,

inserting the selected second module into the second opening.